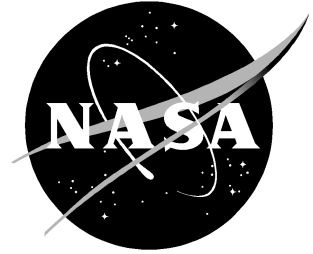


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NASA MULTIMEDIA SERIES SET TO INSPIRE HISPANIC YOUTH

Hoping to enhance the future U.S. scientific work force, NASA is launching Noticiencias NASA™, a new program under the agency's Hispanic Education Initiative.

Designed for students in grades K-5, Noticiencias NASA™ is a Spanish-language, research-inquiry, standards-based, and technology-focused educational program. Noticiencias NASA™ uses the Internet, animation and video. It will introduce a rising population of young Hispanics to the world of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, NASA missions and research.

According to the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics, Hispanics are the fastest growing sector of the school-age population, the work force of tomorrow. It is projected in 25 years; one in every four children in U.S. elementary schools will be Hispanic.

Noticiencias NASA™ features Hispanic students explaining science, technology, engineering, mathematics and NASA facts to other children in an entertaining and instructional format. The one-minute video programs explain everyday phenomena, correct misconceptions, and answer frequently asked questions about the Earth and space. The program also uses animated characters (for grades K-2). The coordinating Web site offers detailed written explanations, hands-on activities, resources and computer-graded quizzes.

Topics range from, "Why do astronauts float in space?" and, "Did you know NASA's Odyssey spacecraft found water ice under the surface of Mars?" to "What is nanotechnology?" and "How does the Internet work?"

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"It is our hope these programs will inspire kids to pursue careers in the engineering and science fields," said Ivelisse Gilman, manager of the Hispanic Education Initiative at NASA's Langley Research Center (LaRC), Hampton, Va. The Hispanic Education Initiative is an outreach effort designed to address the serious shortage of Hispanic men and women in these fields. "We are striving to bolster students' learning potential as well as address a critical aspect of maintaining leadership in science and engineering in the 21st century," Gilman added.

Noticiencias NASA™ is sponsored by NASA's Office of Biology & Physical Research (OBPR) and produced by LaRC for Distance Learning. According to Bonnie McClain, OBPR chief of education, statistics indicate participation by Hispanics in the scientific labor force continues to trail behind other ethnic groups. Hispanic students take fewer mathematics, science, and technology courses. OBPR is pleased to support this programming, designed to pique the interest of young people, motivate them to find out more about science, math, and technology, and to help overcome lack of participation by Hispanic students.

LaRC for Distance Learning produces five award-winning, educational programs in English and Spanish: NASA's Kids Science News Network™, NASA SCI Files™, NASA CONNECT™, NASA LIVE and NASA's Destination Tomorrow™.

For information about the Noticiencias NASA multimedia series, on the Internet, visit:

<http://ksnnsp.larc.nasa.gov>

For NASA Web sites in Spanish on the Internet, visit:

http://www.nasa.gov/about/highlights/En_Espanol.html

For information about NASA education programs on the Internet, visit:

<http://education.nasa.gov>

For information about NASA and agency programs on the Internet, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov>